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Engineers Establish Combat Outpost in Southern Afghanistan

By Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jill LaVoie
Special to American Forces Press Service

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan, Feb. 11, 2009 - To maintain a consistent presence to the southeast of Forward Operating Base Ramrod in southern Afghanistan, 1st Infantry Division soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, recently secured a piece of desert to build Combat Outpost Terminator.



Army Spc. Eric Hesler, 62nd Engineer Bravo Company, builds a tent floor. The company has built several forward operating bases during its year-long deployment in Afghanistan. U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Jill LaVoie (Click photo for screen-resolution image); [high-resolution image](#) available.

Within six hours of arriving, 62nd Engineer Bravo Company soldiers had built a protective berm. Less than 48 hours later, the engineers had constructed more than 1,000 meters of an 11-foot tall Hesco barrier to encircle the new combat outpost.

"We can establish a [forward operating base] to a greater extent than infantry setting up concertina wire and foxholes," Army Sgt. 1st Class Arnold Amador, a platoon sergeant, said. "We allow for a more secure area with Hesco [walls], berms and a tank ditch – quickly."

The original plan allowed 22 days for the engineers to establish the combat outpost, but they managed to knock out the required elements in nine days. After 14 days of being on the ground, they had completed a "full up" outpost, including tents, gravel roads and a fuel point.

"I think we were able to accomplish so much so quickly because of the soldiers' motivation and experience," Amador said. "They have been doing this for over a year, so they are on point."

Army Sgt. Bryan Walters, a heavy-equipment operator, said the unit has improved or established eight bases – and put up about 35 miles of Hesco walls --throughout Afghanistan over the past year.

The engineers do more than put up perimeters. They also bring life-support systems such as heat, cooling and power.

Amador said the engineers have been able to do so much at Combat Outpost Terminator because they have a strong relationship with the unit.

"They let us do what we needed to do, while providing us with what we needed," he said. "We had a great communications atmosphere. At every step, if we needed their support, they gave it."

(Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jill LaVoie serves in the 1st Infantry Division's 2nd Battalion, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team public affairs office.)

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Army Pfc. Kaleb Thompson, foreground, and Army Sgt. Patrick Rosa, both with 62nd Engineer Bravo Company, secure a crane to a flatbed. The company has built several forward operating bases during its year-long deployment in Afghanistan. U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Jill LaVoie

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